

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Boca Raton, Florida)

For Immediate Release

September 23, 1988

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I have today signed H.R. 4775, the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1989. This Act funds the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, the General Services Administration, and other agencies for the coming fiscal year.

The Treasury-Postal bill is the fourth Fiscal Year 1989 appropriations bill to be enacted into law. It provides funds at levels similar to those I proposed in my Fiscal Year 1989 budget. The Congress completed action on this bill on time and within budget and generally preserved our priorities. I urge the Congress to do the same with the remaining appropriations bills before the new fiscal year begins on October 1.

The Act also provides a well-deserved 4.1 percent pay raise for most Federal civilian and military personnel. To ensure that the Federal pay increase is consistent with reduction of the Federal deficit, I urge the Congress to continue to provide in the appropriations bills that departmental and agency budgets must absorb the cost of the pay raise.

I must, however, note my objections to section 619 of H.R. 4775, which purports to forbid the implementation or enforcement of certain agreements between the United States Government and its employees. This provision raises profound constitutional concerns. Indeed, a provision in last year's omnibus continuing resolution (Public Law 100-202) identical to section 619 was recently declared unconstitutional by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. The Court concluded that restrictions on the implementation or enforcement of nondisclosure agreements required of Government employees with access to classified information impermissibly interfered with my ability to prevent unauthorized disclosures of our most sensitive diplomatic, military, and intelligence activities.

As President of the United States, I have the constitutional responsibility to ensure the secrecy of information whose disclosure would threaten our national security. Our Nation's security depends upon our success in diplomatic, military, and intelligence activities, and that success depends upon our ability to protect the Nation's secrets. The Supreme Court has recognized my authority in this area. In accordance with my sworn obligation to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, section 619 will be considered of no force or effect unless and until the ruling of the District Court is reversed by the Supreme Court.

RONALD REAGAN

THE WHITE HOUSE,
September 22, 1988.
